Dr. Phillip M. Wilder is an associate professor of literacy. A former secondary teacher and literacy coach, Phillip spent seventeen years as a practitioner including seven years partnering with teachers on responsive literacy instruction while working in the Center for Education in Small Urban Communities at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Whether in his work with schools desiring to support youth literacies in academic disciplines, in his role as the Senior Education Advisor to Mwangaza Education for Partnership in Arusha, Tanzania which supports critically conscious schools or as a RYT-200 yoga and meditation teacher, Phillip prioritizes partnerships where literacy is a tool for conscious connection with self and community. His current research explores how youth use literacy to create self-compassion, interrogate culturally-conditioned identities and offer compassion to self and others.

There is currently a “crisis of connection” where people are increasingly disconnected from themselves and others resulting in alienation, isolation, and decreased empathy. Through this talk, Dr. Wilder discusses how literacy offers youth (and scholars) a tool of conscious connection with self and community.

Dr. Wilder was promoted to Associate Professor with tenure in 2019.